



## **United States Mission to the OSCE**

### **Territorial Integrity of Georgia**

As delivered by Ambassador Stephan M. Minikes  
to the Permanent Council, Vienna  
December 18, 2003

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The United States is concerned by the report of the Georgian government that the Russian authorities have made a unilateral decision to ease visa restrictions for Georgian nationals resident in the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, one of the regions of Georgia.

During the Meeting of the Ministerial Council in Maastricht earlier this very month, Secretary Powell reaffirmed the commitment of the United States to Georgia's territorial integrity. He stated very clearly, and I quote here, "Long-running conflicts in ... Abkhazia and South Ossetia unfortunately seem no closer to resolution this year than last. We must find the political will to turn confrontation into cooperation to benefit the entire Caucasus region."

Secretary Powell also urged the international community and again I quote here, to "do everything possible to support Georgia's territorial integrity throughout and beyond the election process. No support should be given to breakaway elements seeking to weaken Georgia's territorial integrity."

The United States thus urges all parties involved here to work constructively to support Georgia's territorial integrity.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.